



The Celtic Heritage Trail  
PO. Box 1376  
Moline, IL 61266-1376  
email: [info@celticheritageqc.org](mailto:info@celticheritageqc.org)  
[www.celticheritageqc.org](http://www.celticheritageqc.org)  
A 501(c)3 Non-Profit Corporation

# THE EARLY CELTIC HERITAGE OF DAVENPORT



Black Hawk Purchase Treaty depicting Antoine LeClaire,  
Governor John Reynolds, and General Winfield Scott at table.  
(Original painting in downtown Davenport's Wells Fargo Bank lobby)

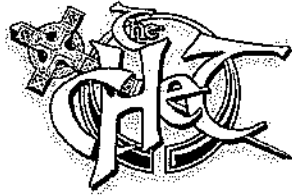


•

•

•

•



### Board of Directors

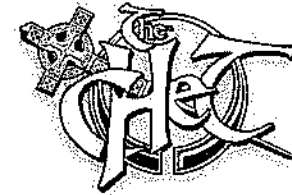
Bill Fisher  
Ryan Dye  
Ruth Clayton-Davis  
Gwen Foulkes  
Joe Nobiling  
Mike Davis  
Joe Dooley  
Shelly Johnson  
Dolores Sierra  
Kathleen Conway  
Bill Gillies

### Mission:

Preserving the Celtic Heritage of the Quad Cities by informing, educating and inspiring the general public, students, tourists, and Celts with programs about Celtic contributions to the Quad City region.

# THE EARLY CELTIC HERITAGE OF DAVENPORT

Published and Produced by



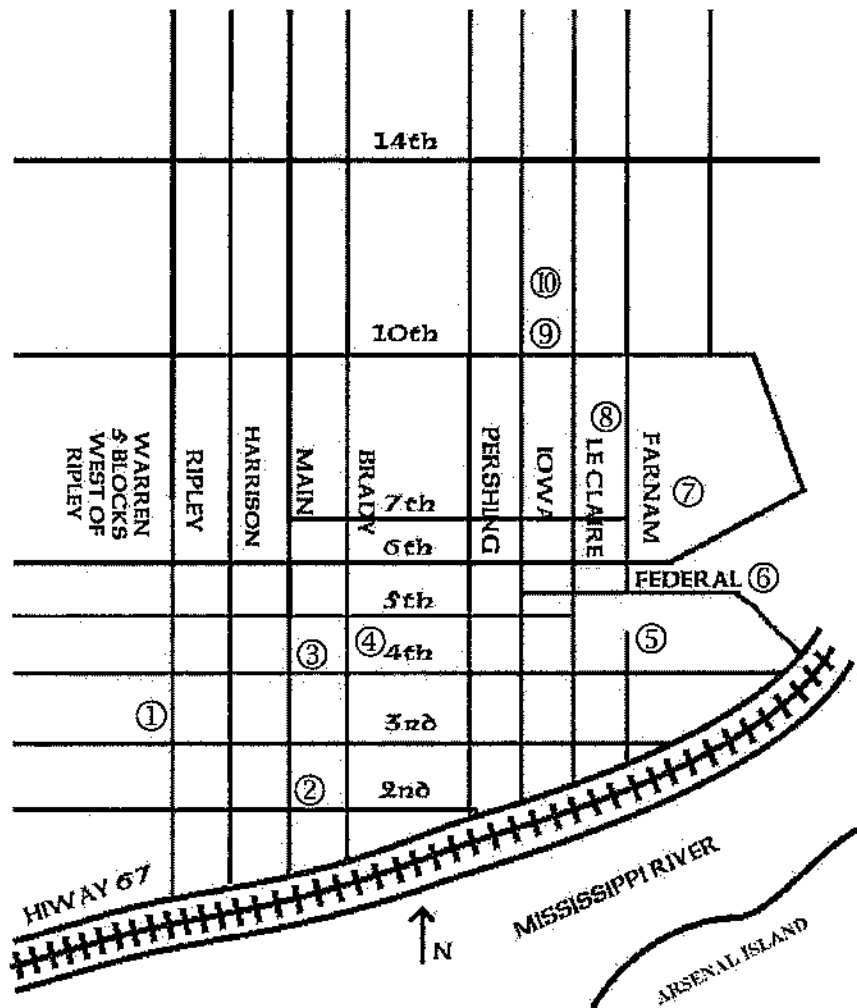
The Celtic Heritage Trail  
PO. Box 1376  
Moline, IL 61266  
info@celticheritageqc.org  
www.celticheritageqc.org  
A 501(c)3 Non-Profit Corporation.



This publication was produced in part with funds provided by the Riverboat Development Authority  
Blackhawk Hotel, 200 E. Third Street  
Davenport, IA 52801  
(319) 328-8078  
rda@netexpress.net  
www.riverboatauthority.com  
A Non-Profit Corporation affiliated with Rhythmi City Casino.

# THE EARLY CELTIC HERITAGE OF DAVENPORT SITE MAP

DEVELOPMENT DATES 1832 - 1882



The Celtic Heritage Trail (The CHeT) eagerly supports all Celtic organizations and activities in the Quad Cities, either physically, in spirit, and/or financially.

## The Organizations include:

The Celtic Cultures Alliance  
<http://www.celtichighlandgames.org/>

The Cornish/Welsh Heritage Society  
[laity61275@yahoo.com](mailto:laity61275@yahoo.com)

The St. Patrick Society  
<http://www.stpatsqc.com>

St. Ambrose University  
<http://www.sau.edu/irishstudies>

The Scottish-American Society  
<http://members.aol.com/scotamerdav/scotamer.html>

The Illowa Community Folk Dances  
<http://illowafolkdance.tripod.com/>

Quad Cities Ceili Club  
<http://www.netexpress.net/~gbade/cceli.htm>

For further information,  
 visit The CHeT's website at  
<http://www.celticheritageqc.org>  
 email: [info@celticheritageqc.org](mailto:info@celticheritageqc.org)  
 snail mail: The Celtic Heritage Trail  
 P.O. Box 1376  
 Moline, IL 61266-1376

Site #82-10-FN 631. Davenport Community Development Department, Iowa Division of Historic Preservation, 1981.

64.4.171.250/history/day.cgi?  
<http://www.iowaoldpress.com/1A/Jefferson/1884/Nov.html>

<http://www.wru.edu/~lawfac/jelkins/lp-2001/gannon.html>

### HIBERNIAN HALL

of Hibernians, Division No. 1, Davenport, Iowa, 1897-1912. Davenport Public Library, Special Collections Section.

### SACRED HEART

Greer, Edward C. Cork Hill Cathedral. Davenport, Iowa: Gordon Printing Company, 1956.

Picturesque Tri-Cities : an art work, comprising illustrations of scenery and portraits of the prominent and representative people of Moline and Rock Island, Illinois, and Davenport, Iowa, the Rock Island Arsenal and vicinity. Davenport, Iowa: C. J. Martin and Company, 1901.

[home.att.net/~Local\\_Catholic/CatholicsUS-DubuqueIA.htm](http://home.att.net/~Local_Catholic/CatholicsUS-DubuqueIA.htm)

<http://www.qcmemory.org/QCHistory/Events/developypys.htm>

[http://www.rc.net/davenport/sacred\\_heart\\_cathedral/index.htm](http://www.rc.net/davenport/sacred_heart_cathedral/index.htm)

### SAINT ANTHONY'S

Downer, Harry. Early Davenport. Davenport, Iowa: Friendly House, 1931.

Picturesque Tri-Cities : an art work, comprising illustrations of scenery and portraits of the prominent and representative people of Moline and Rock Island, Illinois, and Davenport, Iowa, the Rock Island Arsenal and vicinity. Davenport, Iowa: C. J. Martin and Company, 1901.

Smith, John S. St. Anthony's 1837-1953: First Church in Davenport Iowa. Davenport, Iowa: St. Anthony's, 1953.

St. Anthony's (Davenport, Iowa). St. Anthony's 150th Anniversary: 1837-1987. Davenport, Iowa: St. Anthony's, 7.

[iagenweb.org/history/historical\\_records/jul1893.htm](http://iagenweb.org/history/historical_records/jul1893.htm)

### SHARON

Downer, Harry E. History of Davenport and Scott County Iowa: Illustrated (2 vols). Chicago: S.J. Clarke, 1910.

Svendsen, Marlys A. Davenport, Where the Mississippi Runs West: a Survey of Davenport History and Architecture. Davenport, Iowa: City of Davenport, 1982.

Obit. Davenport Daily Times 11 July 1949: p12.

Obit. The Democrat Monday Evening 11 July 1949: 1p and p2.

Bowers, Martha and Svendsen-Roesler, Marlys. Architectural/Historical Survey Davenport, Iowa. Site #82-10-FN 728. Davenport Community Development Department Iowa Division of Historic Preservation, 1981.

<http://www.celticcousins.net/irishiniowa/aolnews.htm>

## THE EARLY CELTIC HERITAGE OF DAVENPORT

The beginning of United States settlement in the Iowa Territory followed The Black Hawk War of 1832. Scotsman, General Winfield Scott, led U.S.

troops in this war with his headquarters located on Arsenal Island just outside of Fort Armstrong east of the present Clock Tower building. Scott County is named for General Scott. Quad City Celts were present and active during the early days of Davenport. In 1833 a Dr. Spencer and a Scotsman, Mr. McCloud contended for a



parcel of land that was to become the future city of Davenport. To settle the contention, Antoine LeClaire bought both of them out paying \$150 for the parcel. In 1835 a group of men met in George Davenport's home on Arsenal Island to form a company with the intent to purchase the land that LeClaire bought from Dr. Spencer and Mr. McCloud, and lay out a town site there. The men that met and the company they created consisted of Antoine LeClaire, George Davenport, Major Thomas Smith, Levi S. Colton, Philip Hambaugh, Captain James May, and Scotsmen, Major William Gordon and Alexander McGregor. Major Gordon, a United States Surveyor, and one of the company, surveyed and laid out the land in the spring of 1836. The land parcel surveyed and laid out included 36 blocks bounded by the Mississippi River on the south, Harrison Street on the east, Seventh Street on the north, and Warren on the west with 6 half-blocks adjacent to Warren.<sup>5</sup>

① **CORNER OF RIPLEY AND THIRD STREETS:** Born in Dundee, Scotland, James MacKintosh traveled to Canada in 1817 and became a bookbinder. In 1835 he journeyed to Iowa, explored the state's unpeopled prairies, and became one of the founding fathers

of Davenport. In October, 1836, in a log house built by Antoine LeClaire, MacKintosh opened a small store selling dry-goods, groceries, hardware and provisions to the Davenport populace. A leading businessmen, MacKintosh served on the first jury empanelled in the state of Iowa and reverted to his original trade of bookbinding to become Iowa's first official bookbinder. He was killed in the Civil War.<sup>5</sup>

② **THE LECLAIRE HOUSE HOTEL**, built in 1839 at the northeast corner of Second and Main Streets, for 20 years prior to the Civil War was a northern resort spot for southerners. Known for providing first class dining and proximity to hunting, fishing, and boating, it continued to exist as a hotel until it was demolished in 1910. A Scots stonemason, Alexander Brownlie, was responsible for the stone edifice work on this building. Brownlie was born in Scotland in 1805. Between 1826 and 1838 he lived in Canada where he farmed for a time and went to work on the Rideau Canal as a stonemason. He was part of the crew shaping the giant stones used in building the lower lock at Smiths Falls. He also worked on Ottawa's Parliament Building. Brownlie left Canada for Iowa in 1838, settling in Long Grove. He died in 1889 in Brooklyn, Iowa, and is buried in Long Grove near his sod house that still stands.<sup>5</sup>



③ **ST. ANTHONY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH** 417 North Main Street: One of the oldest parishes in the diocese of Davenport, St. Anthony's Catholic Church was constructed in 1837 of the first bricks manufactured in the city on a block of ground designated as "Church Square." Under the direction of Reverend Samuel Mazzuchelli and resident pastor Father Pelamourges, this two story rectangular building served as more than a house of worship for the inhabitants of the area, many of whom were Irish and German immigrants.



September 4, 1882, St. Ambrose Seminary opened when thirty-boys walked through the doors to be greeted by Fr. A. J. Schulte, and Mr. Joseph Halligan, the first teachers at St. Ambrose. From these beginnings, St. Ambrose University was born. St. Ambrose remained on this site until 1885 when it moved to its current location on West Locust Street.<sup>3</sup>

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This booklet was developed, designed, and printed by a grant from the Riverboat Development Authority of Scott County, Iowa.

Booklet research and content was researched, developed, and written by the following individuals:

- <sup>1</sup> Ryan Dye, PhD., History Department Chair, St. Ambrose Univ.
- <sup>2</sup> Shelly Johnson, Librarian Orion School System
- <sup>3</sup> Fr. George McDaniel, PhD., Historian, St. Ambrose Univ.
- <sup>4</sup> Bill Fisher, Historian
- <sup>5</sup> Ruth Davis, Educator.

Layout and design by Joe Nobiling.

Back cover photos courtesy of Bill Fisher.

Front cover photo courtesy of Browning Museum, Rock Island Arsenal.

Photos of the Gannon and Sharon homes courtesy of the 1981 Marlys Svendsen Architectural/Historical Survey.

Photos of St. Anthony's Church, Sacred Heart Cathedral, and St. Ambrose College courtesy of <http://www.celticcousins.net>.

Photo of the LeClaire House Hotel, courtesy of Richardson-Sloane Special Collections Center, Davenport Public Library, 321 Main St., Davenport, IA 52801-1490.

Photo of Original St. Ambrose College, courtesy Saint Ambrose University, Davenport, Iowa.

Additional thanks for input and direction from Ruth Clayton-Davis, Educator.

## RESOURCES

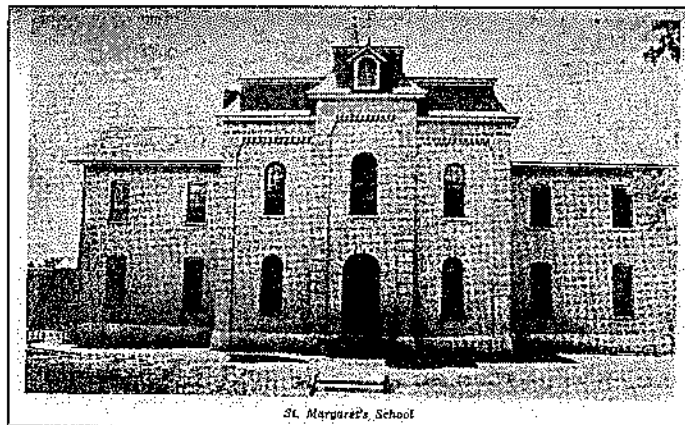
### GANNON

Ringgold, E.M. "Davenport Irish". Federal Writers Project, June 1939.

Obit. Davenport Democrat and Leader 8 March 1926: p3.

Bowers, Martha and Svendsen-Roesler, Marlys. Architectural/Historical Survey Davenport, Iowa.

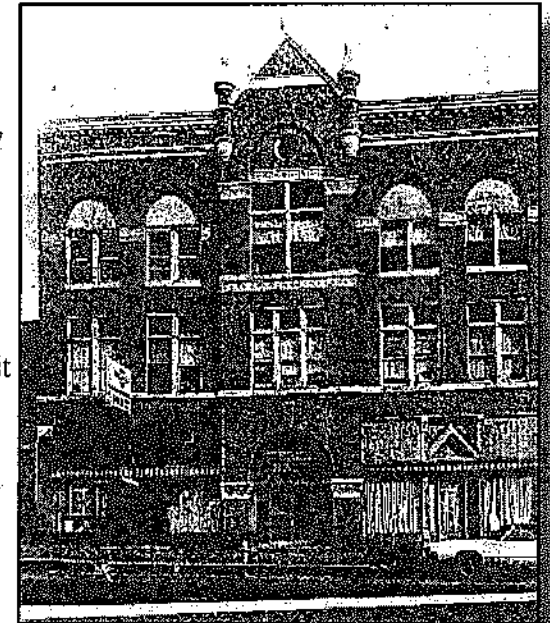
after Marguerite LeClaire, wife of Antoine LeClaire, and St. Margaret of Scotland. Three years after the construction of the church a parochial school was added to the parish block. St. Marguerite's Church had been in operation for twenty five years when, in 1881, the first bishop of the new diocese in the "Iowa Territory," John McMullen, originally from County Down, Ireland, chose it as his cathedral. Eight years later, under advisement from Bishop Cosgrove, plans were approved for a new cathedral to be built on site. The contract was awarded to Walsh & Edwards of Davenport and the foundation was laid on July 24, 1889. The new cathedral was built of Bedford Stone in the authentic Gothic style and the church underwent a name change, becoming Sacred Heart of Jesus, the first cathedral in the United States to be so called. Pope Leo XIII permitted the name change providing a chapel be erected within the cathedral and dedicated to St. Margaret of Scotland. At the turn of the century an addition was made to the school, which operated in its present state from 1915 until 2004. It is here that St. Ambrose University of Davenport, Iowa had its beginning before moving to its present site. <sup>2</sup>



⑩ **ORIGINAL ST. AMBROSE COLLEGE:** In 1882 Bishop John McMullen, born in Ballynahinch, County Down, wanted a place to begin a college. The pastor of St. Marguerite's Parish, Fr. Henry Cosgrove, offered two rooms in his parish grade school. There, on

On October 4, 1838 the church was first used as a courtroom, and thereafter all debates, city council sessions and community activities were held here. By 1850, due to a need for a larger space, the little brick building gave way to a new stone church. This edifice, completed late in 1853, continues to serve the people of Davenport. <sup>2</sup>

④ **HIBERNIAN HALL:** The Ancient Order of Hibernians is an Irish Catholic fraternal society that originated in Ireland sometime between the 16th and the 18th century. In 1836, a group of Irish immigrants in New York City formed the first chapter of the AOH in America. Like in Ireland, the AOH in America was formed primarily to protect and to promote the interests of Irish-American Catholics and of the Catholic Church. The Davenport Irish organized an AOH chapter in March 1884, and constructed the Hibernian Hall as their meeting place in 1889. Until the Davenport AOH and their Ladies Auxiliary disbanded in 1937, their Hibernian Hall was considered one of the most beautiful and valuable AOH buildings in the state. <sup>1</sup>



⑤ **FARNAM & 5TH STREET:** On September 21, 1832 General Winfield Scott & Governor Reynolds of Illinois negotiated the 'Black Hawk Purchase' with the Sacs, Foxes, and the Winnebagos. (See the cover photo.) The treaty deeded 6 million acres to the Americans. The price per acre was 9 cents. <sup>4</sup>

⑥ **THE PATCH:** An Irish neighborhood established by residents who worked on the first railroad bridge to cross the Mississippi, this neighborhood extended from Iowa and Federal Streets to the

Mississippi River. It became known as “The Patch” because of the vegetable gardens the residents grew in their yards. <sup>5</sup>

⑦ **THE GANNON HOME** at 631 Farnam, Davenport, Iowa was the residence of prominent lawyer, politician, and publisher, M.V. Gannon. Mr. Gannon came to America in October 1866 after leading a group of young Irish patriots in liberating Fenian prisoners from Kilmain Hall, Castle Kilrain. Upon arriving in the area he was first employed as a teacher in Rock



Island and later became the principal of St. Marguerite’s parochial school. He developed the first Catholic newspaper in this region, the ‘Iowa Catholic Advocate’ and contributed poetry and prose to other papers including the Rock Island Argus, St. Louis Western Watchman, and New York Freeman’s Journal. In 1881 he became leader of the First Davenport Branch of the Irish National Land League of America. Ten years later he was chosen as President of the National Land League. Mr. Gannon was also elected as a member of Davenport’s City Council and later became the district attorney. A skilled speaker, his passion for oration was best displayed when pleading the cause of Irish freedom. It was said of Michael Valentine Gannon that he was ‘one of the most brilliant of the galaxy of brilliant orators who won over American public opinion to the support of the cause of the Emerald Isle for freedom’. (Ringgold, p 2) <sup>2</sup>

⑧ **THE SHARON HOME:** Fred B. Sharon and brother Thomas arrived in Davenport, Iowa in 1882. Together they published the Iowa Catholic Messenger which Thomas had established a few months prior to the move. Upon the death of Thomas, in 1888, Fred took over the management; a tenure he held for fifty years. Under his leadership the Messenger became recognized as an outstanding religious publication, including not only religious information but Irish and German nationalistic writings. In 1931

Pope Pius XI conferred the rank of Knight of Saint Gregory on Mr. Sharon, primarily for his work on the Messenger. Known as an astute business man he was the incorporator of many banking institutions. Among these were the Home Building Loan and Savings Association, Union Savings Bank, and Citizens Trust. He was also the incorporator of the Hibernian Hall Association and charter member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, Loras Council, Knights of Columbus, and Pelemorgues Court Catholic Order of Foresters. In 1913 President Woodrow Wilson appointed him Davenport postmaster, a position he held for nearly nine years. Mr. Sharon also served as Vice-President of the Roman Catholic Mutual Protective Society of Iowa and organizer of the Good Samaritans. In his private life Fred B. Sharon was an active member of Sacred Heart Cathedral. A prolific businessman, civic leader and esteemed resident of Davenport he made his home at 728 Farnam Street. Mr. Sharon died on July 10, 1949 and is buried in Mt. Calvary Cemetery. <sup>2</sup>



⑨ **SACRED HEART ROMAN CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL** 422 East 10th Street: In 1856 Antoine LeClaire offered a parcel of land for the construction of a new Catholic church in Davenport, which he eventually funded in total. This new church was to be built at the top of “Cork Hill”, an area between 6th and 13th Streets named for the many residents originating from County Cork, Ireland. Because so many Irish Catholic residents attended the church, it was often referred to as “Cork Hill Cathedral.” The formal name, however, was St. Marguerites,

